

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3416

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IS SY LE JO

SUBJ: MFA OFFICIAL'S VIEW OF SYRIAN CALL FOR SYRIA-JORDAN-LEBANON
PALESTINIAN CONFEDERATION

REF: DAMASCUS 6870

1. IN A DISCUSSION WITH AN EMBOFF OCTOBER 14, MFA DIRECTOR OF MIDDLE EAST AND MEDITERRANEAN AFFAIRS (VERED) SAID THAT THE SYRIAN CALL FOR A QUADRIPARTITE CONFEDERATION OF SYRIA, JORDAN, LEBANON AND THE PALESTINIANS IS "HIGHLY IMPORTANT". THE OCTOBER 5 STATEMENT BY THE BAATHIST NATIONAL COMMAND IS NOTEWORTHY, VERED SAID, BECAUSE IT IS THE FIRST PUBLIC ENDORSEMENT OF CONFEDERATION BY THE SYRIAN BAATH PARTY.

2. VERED DESCRIBED THE SYRIAN PROPOSAL NO DOUBT RELEASED TO ACCLIMATIZE MASS OPINION IN THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED AS A MILITARY, POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC AXIS REVOLVING AROUND DAMASCUS. THE CONFEDERATION WOULD NOT ONLY PUT SYRIA IN THE LEADERSHIP OF AN EASTERN CONFRONTATION BLOC, BUT WOULD STAND APART FROM EGYPT ON THE ONE HAND AND IRAQ ON THE OTHER. VERED SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE TIMING OF THE CONFEDERATION PROPOSAL WAS RELATED TO RECENT SYRIAN GAINS IN LEBANON, ITS ANNOUNCEMENT WAS UNDOUBTEDLY MORE THAN A TACTICAL MANOEUVRE.

TOON

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